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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4773
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3915
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2363
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1415
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0825
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2020
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6120
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4347
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2298
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000337

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

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SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - APRIL 10

Leading Stories

1. The Central Bank's consistent decrease of interest rates since January has significantly lowered the costs of mortgage loans and increased real estate sales by up to 50 percent.

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2. Foreign Affairs Minister Mariano Fernandez has requested to meet with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, as part of his farewell activities as former Chilean ambassador to the United States. In regard to a possible meeting between Presidents Bachelet and Obama, Fernandez said yesterday that it would most likely take place in Washington after the Summit of the Americans (Major dailies, 4/9).

3. Editorial: "The U.S. President's approach to U.S. allies with greater humility... and a stronger focus on cooperation... gave the trip [to Europe] a positive balance. By displaying charisma at public events and citizen gatherings and taking part in important agreements, the President was able to revoke to a large extent the negative image of the United States inherited from his predecessor.... Naturally, the goodwill with which he was greeted does not mean that his hosts have forgotten their interests.... But the fact that these differences are manifested in the context of the desire for more dialogue and cooperation is positive.... Obama's trip shows that although Washington is still by far the most important international actor, it is no longer omnipotent... and that today's distribution of power is inclined toward multilateral solutions" (La Tercera, conservative, independent, circ, 101,000, 4/9)

4. Vth Region Investigations Police Prefect Julio Ibaez, said that Jennifer Lizama, the woman allegedly induced into labor by strangers outside her home in Pennsylvania to take her baby, had admitted she had made up the story (El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record, circ. 129,000; La Tercera, 4/9).

Local politics

5. The Senate passed unanimously a norm that establishes that any government official with assets of, or over, USD 20 million is obligated to administer those assets through a blind trust (La Tercera, 4/9).

Corruption

¶6. Think tank "Libertad y Desarrollo" conducted a survey on more than 400 members of The National Business and Entrepreneurial Directorate: 50.1 percent said they had encountered corruption first hand, primarily in the form of influence peddling and bribes to win government bids, obtain permits, or gain access to privileged information. Government companies, municipalities, and the judiciary are perceived as most corrupt (El Mercurio, 4/9).

SIMONS